

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

JULIAN LIU,

Plaintiff,

v.

STATE FARM MUTUAL
AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE
COMPANY,

Defendant.

CASE NO.

ORDER FOR REMOTE /
VIRTUAL CIVIL JURY TRIAL

The Court ORDERS that the jury trial scheduled to commence on March 22, 2021, at 8:30 a.m., be conducted using the following procedures and protocols.

A. Remote / Virtual Trial Format

1. The entire trial, including jury deliberations, will take place using the ZoomGov.com platform. The parties, counsel, witnesses, jurors, and court staff will not be physically present in the courtroom. The Court will call a jury pool of 25 jurors.
2. The public will have telephonic access via a number published on the Court's trial calendar.

B. Preparation

1. Counsel shall familiarize themselves with the ZoomGov.com and Box.com

platforms by reviewing the tutorials located at

<https://www.wawd.uscourts.gov/attorneys/remotehearings>.

2. Counsel shall ensure that they and each of their witnesses have the hardware, software, data bandwidth, and Internet access required to participate remotely. The minimum system requirements are posted at <https://www.wawd.uscourts.gov/attorneys/remotehearings>.
3. Counsel shall also ensure that they have one or more alternative means of communicating with their clients and witnesses, as well as with the Court, outside the ZoomGov.com platform (*e.g.*, via cellular phone or email).
4. Counsel shall consider establishing a high-speed Internet connection (a hard-wired connection is generally preferable to a wireless Internet connection). Counsel shall also consider the feasibility of participating from their office if the impact of others requiring Internet usage during the proceedings might impact a participant's connection speed.
5. Parties and counsel are to participate on March 19, 2021 at 10:00AM with the court and court staff for a technology check.

C. Recording

1. The Court will provide a court reporter for the trial. No part of the trial may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, in whole or in part, by any participant (attorney, party, witness, or juror) or public observer. This prohibition includes any audio or video recording, photographs, and/or screenshots. The parties and counsel shall ensure that each trial participant for which they are responsible acknowledges and agrees to this prohibition.

D. Witnesses and Participants

1. Counsel shall provide, via email to the Court's Trial Coordinator [insert

name, title and contact information], the following information for each party, attorney, paralegal, legal assistant, trial or technical consultant, and witness who will participate remotely:

- Name
- Email address
- Phone number
- Participant status (*e.g.*, party, attorney, witness, etc.)

2. Prior to trial, the Court's Trial Coordinator will supply to counsel the links for the ZoomGov.com sessions. Counsel shall forward the links to other participants, including witnesses, as appropriate.

3. After using the link to access the ZoomGov.com session, participants will enter a virtual waiting room. They will be admitted from the virtual waiting room into the virtual courtroom when appropriate. Counsel are responsible for notifying witnesses when and how they are expected to report to the virtual waiting room.

4. Participants who will not be examining witnesses, testifying, or otherwise presenting matters during the proceedings (e.g., attorneys, paralegals, legal assistants, and trial or technical consultants) shall use the ZoomGov.com platform controls to mute their microphones and deactivate their cameras.

5. During the virtual hearing, each party and all jurors will be visible on video with microphones muted.

6. Counsel and the witness are not to communicate through any other device or method while the witness is testifying. Counsel and the witness may not be in the same room.

E. Exhibits

1. Exhibits shall be numbered in advance of trial in accordance with the

1 protocol set during the pretrial conference and the Standing Order.

- 2 2. All exhibits shall be uploaded by counsel to the “Box.com” platform via
3 one or more links that the Court’s Trial Coordinator will provide via email
4 prior to the trial date.
- 5 3. Exhibits as to which admissibility has been stipulated shall be uploaded to
6 the Box.com folder labeled “Admitted Exhibits.” Exhibits as to which
7 admissibility is disputed shall be uploaded to the respective Box.com folders
8 labeled “Plaintiff’s Proposed Exhibits” and “Defendant’s Proposed
9 Exhibits.” At the end of each trial day, the Court’s Trial Coordinator and
10 counsel will confer, and the Court’s Trial Coordinator will transfer into the
11 “Admitted Exhibits” folder any exhibits in the folders for “Plaintiff’s
12 Proposed Exhibits” and “Defendant’s Proposed Exhibits” that have been
13 offered and admitted into evidence.
- 14 4. After the close of evidence and before the jury begins deliberating, the
15 Court’s Trial Coordinator and counsel will confer to confirm that the
16 “Admitted Exhibits” folder accurately reflects the evidence admitted during
17 the course of trial. During their deliberations, the jurors will be provided
18 access to the Box.com folder for “Admitted Exhibits.”
- 19 5. Hard copies of all exhibits shall be delivered to the E. Barrett Prettyman
20 United States Courthouse Chambers of Judge Rothstein 333 Constitution
21 Ave NW Washington DC 20001 at least two (2) judicial days before the
22 first day of trial. These exhibits shall be bound in one or more three-ring
23 notebooks and appropriately tabbed by exhibit number. While testifying,
24 each witness shall have available a copy of any exhibit that he or she will
25 be expected to use or examine during the trial. The witness shall not access
26 any copy of an exhibit unless and until instructed to do so by the examining

1 counsel. With regard to exhibits as to which admissibility is disputed, the
2 Court will conduct proceedings outside the presence of the jury during
3 which counsel may present arguments and, if necessary, voir dire witnesses,
4 using the screen-sharing function in ZoomGov.com to display the exhibits
5 at issue from the respective Box.com folders. To the extent possible, the
6 Court will rule on the admissibility of exhibits before a witness who is
7 expected to use or examine such exhibits testifies.

- 8 6. The parties shall comply with Local Civil Rule 32(e) concerning the use of
9 depositions at trial. Video depositions that are used as substantive evidence
10 shall be broadcast via ZoomGov.com using the screen-sharing function.
11 Counsel may, but are not required to, upload video depositions to their
12 respective Box.com folders, but the recordings will not be transferred to the
13 “Admitted Exhibits” folder. Transcripts of depositions used during the trial
14 for impeachment or as substantive evidence need not be sealed prior to their
15 use. Counsel may either show the portion of the transcript at issue to the
16 witness using the screen-sharing function in ZoomGov.com or transmit the
17 entire transcript to the witness via mail, email, or otherwise in advance of
18 his or her testimony.
- 19 7. If a program or platform other than Box.com will be used to publish
20 exhibits to the jury, then counsel shall file, prior to the first day of trial, a
21 certification signed under penalty of perjury indicating that the exhibits to
22 be displayed to the jury using the other program or platform are identical to
23 the exhibits uploaded into the folders on Box.com. The parties may use
24 trial presentation technology to present exhibits through the screen share
25 function in ZoomGov.com.
26

1 **F. Professionalism During the Trial**

2 1. **Ambient Noise Protocols:**

3 a. All participants who are not actively being questioned as a witness,
 4 asking questions of a witness, defending a witness, or providing or
 5 responding to opening statements, closing arguments, or other
 6 arguments, shall use the ZoomGov.com platform controls to mute
 7 their microphone and deactivate their video camera. The Court's
 8 Trial Coordinator, who will "host" the ZoomGov.com sessions, will
 9 mute any participant who fails to follow this protocol.

10 b. Participants using multiple devices in a single workspace to access
 11 the trial should avoid audio feedback issues by using the microphone
 12 and speakers on only one device at a time, or by using headphones.

13 2. **Courtesy and Decorum:** To the extent possible, remote trial participants
 14 should conduct themselves in the same way they would if they were
 15 physically present in a courtroom. They should avoid interrupting someone
 16 who is speaking, except as necessary to raise an objection. Virtual trial
 17 participants should silence electronic devices other than the devices
 18 necessary to their remote participation, close unnecessary computer
 19 programs or applications (such as email or calendar notifications), and take
 20 steps to remove or minimize anything in their remote workspace that might
 21 distract from the integrity of the proceedings. The Court understands that
 22 conducting trial virtually, from one's home, for example, presents many
 23 challenges. The Court asks all remote participants to do their best to
 24 maintain professionalism in order to conduct a fair and efficient trial.

25 3. **Objections:** Counsel should make their objections orally. When an
 26 objection is made, the witness shall stop talking until the Court rules on the

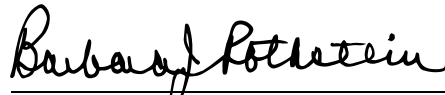
objection. If the objection requires a discussion outside the presence of the jury, the jurors will be placed in the virtual jury room.

4. **Disconnection**: In the event that the Court, a party, an attorney of record, a witness, a juror, or anyone else necessary to the proceedings becomes disconnected from the remote trial, the trial will stop while the connection is reestablished. If the participant has difficulty reconnecting, he or she should call or text [insert name and contact information]. In advance of calling a witness to the virtual stand, counsel must establish with the witness a protocol for contacting the witness in the event of disconnection and ensure that the alternative means of communication (*e.g.*, a cellular phone) is operational.
5. **Appropriate Dress**: Parties, witnesses, and counsel shall dress in the same manner as they would if they physically appeared in a courtroom.
6. **Screen Names**: Remote participants should endeavor to use a screen name in the ZoomGov.com platform that indicates their actual first and last names. As “host,” the Court’s Trial Coordinator will rename any participant whose screen name is incomplete, confusing, unprofessional, or otherwise improper.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

The Clerk is directed to send copies of this Order to all counsel of record.

DATED this 16th day of March, 2021.



Barbara Jacobs Rothstein
U.S. District Court Judge